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# Labor Market Digest, September 2009

Maine Department of Labor

Center for Workforce Research and Information

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# MAINE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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Cumberland County recorded the lowest unemployment rate at 6.3 percent.....page 3

Adjusted statewide unemployment rate decreased from 8.6% to 8.5%.....page 4

Nonfarm employment declined by 22,900 over the year.....page 6

*A publication of  
the*

**MAINE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**  
Center for Workforce  
Research and Information

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*The Maine Department of Labor provides equal opportunity employment and programs. Auxiliary aids and services are provided upon request to individuals with disabilities.*

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# LABOR MARKET DIGEST

September Data

November 2009

## Maine Labor Market: Trends and Issues Report Released

Maine's economy is undergoing constant change. Foreign competition, technology innovation, and business restructuring contribute to dynamic work environments and changing labor markets. Some industries are declining and shedding jobs as others emerge, creating new employment opportunities. The impacts of these shifts challenge individuals, families, and entire communities. Across the spectrum of industries and occupations more is being demanded of workers in terms of knowledge, skills, and abilities required for job performance.

Increasingly, our competitiveness is determined by the quality and availability of human capital. An aging population and the impending retirements of baby boomers will profoundly impact our labor markets and reshape long standing patterns of demand for goods and services. Understanding these dynamics is fundamental to making effective public policies and developing sound public and private investment strategies. The recently published *Maine Labor Market: Trends and Issues* highlights long-term trends in the population, labor force, and structure of employment; examines the impact of the recession on workforce conditions and the coming recovery; and the outlook for employment through 2016. It also highlights two areas of job growth: green jobs and health care.

### Among the report findings are:

- Maine's population is growing slowly and rapidly aging. Our median age of 42 is the oldest in the nation.
- Labor force growth is slowing due to the combination of fewer young adults available to enter the labor force and the baby boom generation moving toward retirement.
- The structure of employment will continue to shift markedly due to shifting buying patterns, technological change, international competition, and a range of other factors.
- Manufacturing industries that once were the backbone of the economy in a number of regions of the state are shedding jobs at an unprecedented rate. Health care and professional and business services have become the engine of job growth.
- The shifting occupational composition of the labor force has major ramifications for knowledge and skill requirements and education and training programs to prepare workers to meet the needs of employers.
- The recession has been deep and long, impacting economic activity on all fronts. Large job losses drove unemployment up, home foreclosure escalated and retail sales plummeted.
- Unemployment is up most among men due to heavy job losses in the manufacturing and construction sectors.
- Jobs have become more concentrated in the Portland-South Portland-Biddeford, Lewiston-Auburn, and Bangor metropolitan areas.
- Though job losses continue, signs of recovery are beginning to emerge.
- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act spurred demand in a number of industries, including road and bridge construction, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and healthcare information systems.

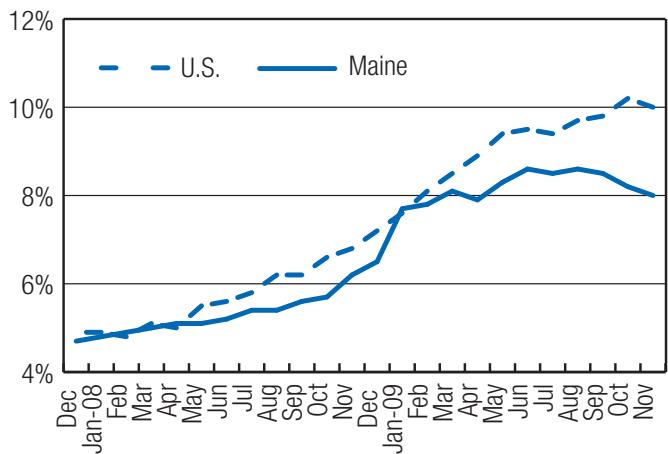
*Maine Labor Market Trends and Issues* is available at [www.maine.gov/labor/lmis/pubs.html](http://www.maine.gov/labor/lmis/pubs.html).

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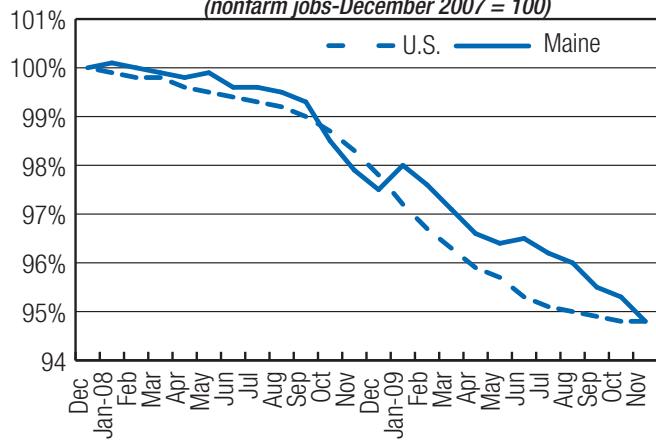
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## Workforce Conditions from the Beginning of the Recession

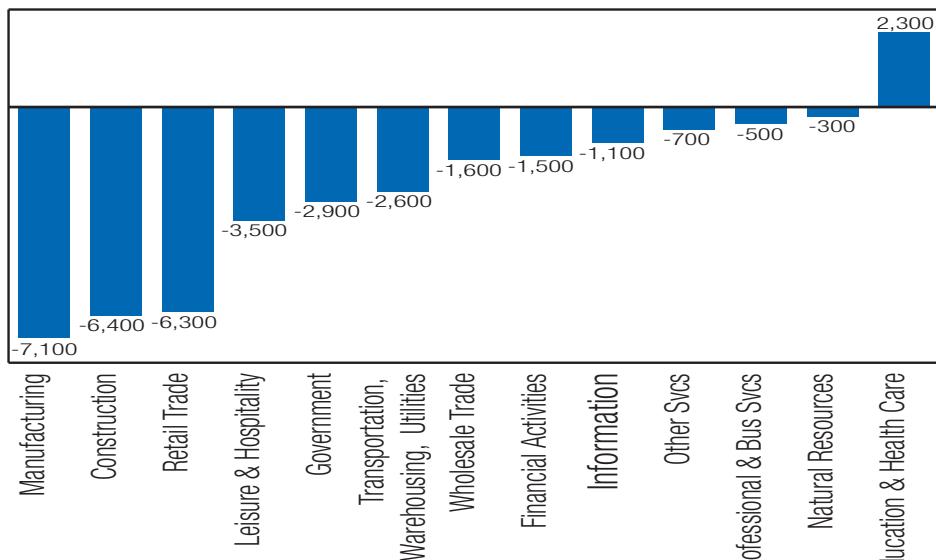
Maine's unemployment rate has trended down since summer



During the recession, Maine has lost nonfarm jobs at about the same rate as the nation  
*(nonfarm jobs-December 2007 = 100)*



Nearly 90 percent of job losses have been in six sectors.  
 Education & Health Care is the only sector with net job growth during the recession.  
*(change in jobs from Dec. 2007 to Nov. 2009)*



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